

XXXVII.—*Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club.*

Nos. LII.—LIV.

No. LII. (March 28th, 1898).

THE fifty-first Meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 16th of March, 1898. *Chairman*: P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S. Twenty-six Members and two guests were present.

Mr. W. E. DE WINTON exhibited a specimen of *Perdix daurica*, purchased in Leadenhall Market. Several hundred specimens of this Partridge were on sale in the market, but their exact origin could not be ascertained. The birds were in excellent condition and had evidently not been shot. That they had come from some Mahommedan district of Asia was equally obvious, as every specimen examined at the British Museum was found to have its throat cut.

Mr. HOWARD SAUNDERS exhibited the specimen of the small Shearwater obtained off the island of Valentia, Kerry, on the 11th of May, 1853. For years this had been identified as the Dusky Shearwater, *Puffinus obscurus* (Gm.), but recent investigations by Mr. Ogilvie Grant in the islands near Madeira, as well as by Mr. Boyd Alexander in the Cape Verde Archipelago, had aroused a suspicion that there might be an error in the identification of the Irish bird. The authorities of the Science and Art Museum of Dublin having kindly forwarded the example in question for comparison with the specimens of *P. obscurus* in the British Museum, it had been clearly established that this was not *P. obscurus*, but the closely allied *P. assimilis* of Gould, which might be distinguished from *P. obscurus* by its smaller size, by the white or pale centres to the inner webs of the primaries, the white under tail-coverts, and a more decided white line on each side of the neck. The identification had been confirmed by Mr. Osbert Salvin. *P. assimilis* bred in the islands of the Madeira and of the Canary groups, as well

as in the Cape Verde Islands, while *P. obscurus* breeds in the Bermudas and the Antilles. Both species have a wide range.

Mr. F. W. STYAN sent for exhibition a new Woodpecker from Fohkien, which he proposed to call—

CHRYSOPHLEGMA RICKETTI, sp. n.

Adult male. Most nearly allied to *Chrysophlegma pierii*, but different from that and other allied species in having the primaries coarsely barred with chestnut and black to the extremity; the chin, moreover, being rufous streaked with black, and only the malar region white with a faint yellowish tinge.

Hab. Ching Ting, Fohkien.

Mr. SCLATER brought forward the subject of "Bipolarity," which had been much discussed recently in the debates on the question of the scientific advantages of an Antarctic expedition, and remarked that in the case of the higher Vertebrates, or in that of Birds at least, no sort of "Bipolarity" could be stated to exist, whatever might be the case in the lower marine animals. Mr. Sclater exhibited a list (see p. 430) in which the birds of Arctica, as represented by the known birds of Franz Josef Land (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1898, p. 249), were contrasted in parallel columns with those of Antarctica (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1894, p. 494), and pointed out that not only were all the Species different, but nearly all the Genera and most of the Families and Orders. Three species of Passeres were found in Arctica, whereas not one was known from Antarctica, although there were vague rumours about a *Corvus* having been seen there. An Owl and a Hawk were found in Arctica, but no *Accipitres* had yet been met with in Antarctica. At least two species of *Anseres* were found in Arctica, but there were only uncertain reports of a Goose of some kind in Antarctica. Three species of Tringoid *Limicolæ* occurred in Arctica, whereas in Antarctica only the Sheath-bill (*Chionis*), belonging to a peculiar Antarctic Family, was known. Among the *Gaviæ* the correspondence was better, as the genera *Sterna*, *Larus*, and *Stercorarius* were repre-

sented in both the Polar Extremities, but the species were in every case different. The Order *Tubinares* was essentially Antarctic, at least ten species having been met with in Antarctica, whereas in the Arctic regions *Fulmarus glacialis* was the sole representative of the group. On the other hand, when we came to the *Pygopodes*, which were essentially an Arctic group, three species were amongst the more abundant of birds in the Arctic regions, and a fourth had occasionally been met with, but not a single form of this group was found in Antarctica. Descending to the *Impennes*, at the bottom of the list, we came again to an essentially Antarctic group, which was absolutely unknown in the Arctic regions, but was well represented by multitudinous individuals of at least four species in Antarctica.

The facts, therefore, as regards Arctic and Antarctic birds might be shortly summarized by stating that no two Avifaunas could be more essentially different, not a single species being identical, and only three genera out of seventeen, whilst the *Pygopodes* of the North were replaced by the absolutely different Order *Impennes* in the South.

*Birds of Arctica.**Birds of Antarctica.*

I. PASSERES.

1. *Plectrophenax nivalis*.
2. *Calcarius lapponicus*.
3. *Otocorys alpestris*.

Corvus, sp. inc. (?).

II. STRIGES.

4. *Nyctea scandiaca*

III. ACCIPITRES.

5. *Falco candicans* (?).

IV. ANSERES.

6. *Bernicla brenta*.
7. *Somateria mollissima*.

Chloephaga, sp. inc. (?).

V. LIMICOLÆ.

8. *Tringa fuscicollis*.
9. — *striata*.
10. *Calidris arenaria*.

1. *Chionis alba*.

*Birds of Arctica.**Birds of Antarctica.*

VI. GAVLE.

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| 11. <i>Sterna macrura.</i> | 2. <i>Sterna hirundinacea.</i> |
| 12. <i>Rhodostethia rosea.</i> | 3. <i>Larus dominicanus.</i> |
| 13. <i>Larus glaucus.</i> | 4. — <i>scoresbyi.</i> |
| 14. <i>Pagophila eburnea.</i> | 5. <i>Stercorarius antarcticus.</i> |
| 15. <i>Rissa tridactyla.</i> | 6. — <i>maccormicki.</i> |
| 16. <i>Stercorarius crepidatus.</i> | |

VII. TUBINARES.

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| | 7. <i>Diomedea fuliginosa.</i> |
| | 8. <i>Oceanites oceanicus.</i> |
| | 9. <i>Majaquens æquinotialis.</i> |
| 17. <i>Fulmarus glacialis.</i> | 10. <i>Thalassœca glacialoides.</i> |
| | 11. — <i>antarctica.</i> |
| | 12. <i>Ossifraga gigantea.</i> |
| | 13. <i>Daption capensis.</i> |
| | 14. <i>Prion vittatus.</i> |
| | 15. — <i>desolatus.</i> |
| | 16. <i>Pagodroma nivea.</i> |

VIII. PYGOPODES.

18. *Colymbus septentrionalis.*
 19. *Uria mandti.*
 20. — *bruennichii.*
 21. *Mergulus alle.*

IX. IMPENNES.

17. *Aptenodytes forsteri.*
 18. *Pygosceles adeliæ.*
 19. — *tæniata.*
 20. *Eudyptes antarctica.*

Mr. BLAAUW exhibited eggs of a Weka Rail (*Ocydromus australis*), laid in his park at Gooilust, which bore a curious similarity to the eggs of *Aramides ypecaha* laid under exactly the same circumstances. Only a small difference in the shape distinguished the eggs of these two Rails from such distant parts of the world as New Zealand and South America.

No. LIII. (April 30th, 1898).

THE fifty-second Meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 20th of April, 1898. *Chairman*: P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S. Thirty-one Members and seven guests were present.

Mr. G. E. H. BARRETT-HAMILTON exhibited some specimens of birds from Kamchatka obtained during his recent trips to the North Pacific, the most interesting being an apparently new species of Nutcracker, which he described as follows:—

NUCIFRAGA KAMCHATKENSIS, sp. n.

N. similis N. caryocacti, sed nigra, nec brunnescens, et remigibus ad apicem albo maculatis vel marginatis. *N. multipunctata* potiùs affinis, et maculis albis magnis ornata, sed areâ albâ rectricum terminali minùs extensâ (1·3–1·5). Long. tot. 13·0 poll., culm. 1·85, alæ 7·2, caudæ 4·6, tarsi 1·55.

Mr. REGINALD B. LODGE exhibited some of his 'Photographs of Bird Life,' which included figures of many British Birds, as well as of other species from the marshes of Holland and Southern Spain.

Mr. HEATLEY NOBLE brought for exhibition an egg of the Great Auk recently acquired by him, and gave a history of the specimen.

Mr. H. L. POPHAM exhibited some clutches of eggs of different species of Thrushes procured by him during his journey to the Yenesei Valley, among which were series of those of *Turdus obscurus* and *Geocichla sibirica*.

Mr. JOSEPH I. S. WHITAKER sent a description of an apparently new species of Shore-Lark from the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, and proposed for it the name

OTOCORYS ATLAS, sp. n.

♂. Similis *O. elwesi* et regione nigrâ paroticâ minimè cum fasciâ pectorali conjunctâ: frontis basi nigrâ: tec-

tricibus alarum arenaceo-brunneis, dorso concoloribus, nec vinaceis: gulâ pallidè sulphureâ sicut in *O. alpestri*.

Hab. Glani, Atlas Mts., Morocco.

Mr. SCLATER, having just returned from a short visit to Malta, proposed to say a few words about the Ornis of that Island. According to the last authorities, the birds of the Maltese group were rather over 300 in number. Of these only some twelve were resident species, breeding in the islands, the remainder being either migrants that pass through in spring and autumn, or occasional visitors. Our leading authority on Maltese ornithology was, of course, Mr. C. A. Wright, whose papers on this subject ('Ibis,' 1864-1870) would be well known to the members of the B. O. C.; but Prof. Giglioli having included Malta within the scope of his 'Avifauna Italica,' reference should also be made to that work, and likewise to Dr. R. Blasius's lately published 'Ornis v. Malta u. Gozo' (see 'Ibis,' 1895, p. 388).

Mr. Sclater had examined the collection of birds in the Museum of the University of Valetta, which contained from 400 to 500 examples of Maltese Birds. These were, unfortunately, badly mounted and cared for, and imperfectly named, and required thorough rearrangement and renewal. He had also had the pleasure of visiting the private collection of Major Francia, R.M.R., which had only lately been commenced, but contained about 100 nicely mounted specimens, many being of considerable rarity. Mr. Sclater suggested that a Handbook of Maltese Birds brought up to date would be a very useful and easy piece of work, and expressed a hope that some member of the B. O. U. would take up the subject.

Mr. W. E. DE WINTON made some further remarks on the Siberian Partridges (*Perdix daurica*), of which so many had recently come to the London markets.

No. LIV. (May 25th, 1898).

THE fifty-third Meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 18th of May, 1898. *Chairman*: P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S. Twenty-eight Members and two guests were present.

Mr. SCLATER exhibited a pair of eggs of the South African Thick-knee (*Edicnemus capensis*), forwarded to him by Mr. J. E. Matcham, C.M.Z.S., of Port Elizabeth, as those of the "Dik-kop" of that district. There was one similar egg of the same species in the collection of the British Museum obtained by Mr. E. L. Layard.

Mr. SCLATER exhibited a second series of beautiful photographs of the nests and eggs of Australian Birds, transmitted to him by Mr. Dudley Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., Assistant-Director of the Zoological Gardens at Melbourne. Amongst these were figures of the nests of the Victoria Lyre-bird (*Menura victoriae*), the Emu-Wren (*Stipiturus malachurus*), and the rarely-found nest (with one egg) of Jardine's Caterpillar-hunter (*Campephaga jardinii*).

Mr. ERNST HARTERT exhibited the type specimens of two new birds obtained by Mr. A. L. Butler on the Guong Ijau, Perak, Malay Peninsula, and characterized them as follows:—

SERILOPHUS ROTHSCILDI, sp. n.

Differs from *S. lunatus*—with which it agrees in the peculiarly shaped tips of the longest primaries—in being darker and greyer above; crown of the head pure grey, not pale rusty brown; ear-coverts grey, with hardly a tint of brown, while they are pale brown in *S. lunatus*, and the rufous colour on the secondaries is deeper; round the eye a narrow ring of white feathers. "Iris greenish brown, mottled with golden specks; eyelid and base of mandible

for about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch bright gamboge-yellow; bill pale whitish blue, tip and lateral edges whitish; feet pale greenish chrome, claws milky blue" (*A. L. Butler*).

Hab. Gunong Ijau, 3000 feet. Named in honour of Mr. Walter Rothschild, at Mr. Butler's request.

CRYPTOLOPHA BUTLERI, sp. n.

♂ *ad.* Crown of the head dark rufous, with a broad deep brown lateral stripe; sides of the head and back ashy grey; lower back, rump, scapulars, smaller upper-wing-coverts, edges to the primaries and rectrices, yellowish green; larger upper-wing-coverts blackish, with a greenish wash and greenish-yellow tips; throat and fore-neck to the chest pale grey; middle of the abdomen white; sides of body, under wing-coverts, axillaries, vent, and under tail-coverts lemon-yellow. "Iris reddish brown; bill dusky, mandible yellowish flesh; feet brownish yellow" (*A. L. B.*).

Wing 51-54 mm., tail 42-45, bill 6.5-7, tarsus 16-16.5.

Nearest to *C. castaneiceps*, but easily distinguished by its darker rufous crown and grey back, besides other differences. Named in honour of Mr. Butler.

Hab. Gunong Ijau, 4000 feet.

Mr. HARTERT also announced that Mr. A. H. Everett, M.B.O.C., had returned to England, and was at 88 Great Portland Street, W., suffering from his long and arduous labours in tropical climates. It was unanimously resolved that an expression of the sympathy of the Club should be conveyed to Mr. Everett, whose illness would, it was hoped, soon pass away; meanwhile he was quite able and anxious to receive visits from his brother-ornithologists.

The Hon. WALTER ROTHSCHILD sent the following communication:—

The expedition sent out to the Galapagos Islands by Frank Blake Webster, at my suggestion, has been very successful, and the collection of birds is the largest and finest yet made in that group. The collectors stayed one day at Clarion Island and procured 85 birds, among which was a

fine series of the new *Sula* described hereafter. Of the 105 species enumerated by Ridgway as occurring in the Galapagos Islands, good series of nearly all were obtained. Several authors have mentioned the breeding-place of an Albatross on Hood Island, but no specimens were ever collected; while two species of Albatross were mentioned by former visitors to the islands, and Ridgway suggested that they would be *Diomedea exulans* and *D. nigripes*. The present expedition, however, found only one species of Albatross on Hood Island, and that proved to be *Diomedea irrorata* Salvin, of which hitherto only the type in the British Museum was known. The second supposed dark species will probably be the young of the above.

In addition to nearly all the species known to inhabit the archipelago, examples of several others were obtained, some seven or eight of which are new to science.

Mr. Hartert will show you the type specimens of six new species, of which I send you the descriptions. One species is named after Mr. Frank Blake Webster, who arranged and sent out the expedition, and one after each of the collectors.

PHALACROCORAX HARRISI, sp. n.

This is the most remarkable discovery made during the expedition.

Adult: upperside brownish black, bases of feathers blackish grey; scapulars and wing-coverts dark hoary grey, with black borders; a number of white filaments scattered about head and neck. Underside a mixture of pale brown and grey; tail black; quills blackish brown, with greyish tips on outer margin.

This bird is the largest known Cormorant, being if anything bigger than the extinct *Ph. perspicillatus*, and its wings are quite soft and incapable of flight, and of about the same size as the wings of the Great Auk, *Alca impennis*.

Wing of *Ph. harrisi*, 7 to 7.5 inches.

„ *Alca impennis*, 6.7 inches.

Hab. Narborough Island, Galapagos group.

SULA WEBSTERI, sp. n.

Adult, in white plumage closely resembling *S. piscatrix*, having the same hoary-grey on the primaries, but at once distinguishable by its dark brownish-grey tail; the bill is also more slender, and the red at the base of the mandible is more extended. Young in grey plumage somewhat variable, very different from the young of *S. piscatrix*, being not so dark above and the feathers of the back uniform brown, not edged with light grey; below darker than the young of *S. piscatrix*. Size of *S. piscatrix*.

Hab. Clarion Island, Galapagos, and the neighbouring seas.

NESOMIMUS HULLI, sp. n.

Similar to *N. melanotis*, but with the buffy-white tips of the primaries—and still more those of the secondaries—decidedly wider, and with a distinct moustache-like line of black spots from the base of the mandible to the neck.

Culpepper Island. A good series.

NESOMIMUS AFFINIS, sp. n.

Near *N. parvulus* from Albemarle, but easily distinguished by its deeper, almost uniform dark brown upper surface and the more heavily streaked sides of the body. Chest with a more distinct brownish shade.

Narborough Island. A small series.

CERTHIDEA BECKI, sp. n.

Very closely allied to *C. fusca* Scl. & Salvin, from Abingdon Island, but generally darker above and below, especially the sides of the body and chest more brownish. Bill in many—but not in all—specimens a little shorter; wing considerably longer, in males always above 55 mm. (generally 57–58, never more than 58), in females about 54–55.5 mm.; while in *C. fusca* the wing of the males does not exceed 54 mm. in length, that of the females being only 50–52 mm.

Wenman Island. A good series.

CERTHIDEA DROWNEI, sp. n.

Closely allied to *C. becki*, but generally larger; beak stouter, throat rusty, crown darker. Wing of one, marked male, 62 mm., of another, also marked male, but probably a female, 57 mm.

Culpepper Island. Only two specimens.

The Hon. WALTER ROTHSCHILD also sent for exhibition two new birds from British New Guinea, which he described as follows:—

IFRITA, gen. nov.

Of doubtful affinities, but probably near *Amalocichla* and *Cinclosoma*, agreeing with the latter genus in the form of the bill, but differing in its softer body-plumage, longer toes, softer tail and wings, and less graduated tail. Agreeing with *Amalocichla* in its soft plumage, but differing totally in the less compressed, shorter, and stouter bill. The wings are evidently of the usual rounded form of the *Timeliidæ*, but cannot be described, being in moult. The tail is incomplete, but seems to be almost square; bill a little shorter than the head; the strong tarsus about half as long as the tail.

IFRITA CORONATA, sp. n.

Crown black, with a broad blue circle; lores and a narrow frontal line buff. Above the eye a small rusty buff patch, below the eye a black semicircle. Ear-coverts dark brown, behind the eye a patch of elongated white feathers. Rest of upper parts olive-brown; tail and wings dark olive-brown; quills with more yellowish-brown outer edges and rust-coloured inner edges. Some of the wing-coverts with buff tips. Below pale ochraceous, washed with olive-brown on the flanks and vent; throat lighter, almost whitish. Underwing-coverts bright ochraceous buff. Maxilla deep brown, mandible light-coloured. Wing about 88 mm., tail about 63, exposed part of bill 19, tarsus 29.

Low country east of Port Moresby, Brit. New Guinea.

CHARMOSYNA ATRATA, sp. n.

♂. Bill red; forehead purplish black, centre of crown darker. A patch of elongated lilac-blue feathers on the occiput; neck and upper back black, with a reddish shade; under surface dull black, sides of the breast dark green; back and upper wing-coverts dark green; lower back, rump, and sides of the belly carmine; rump with a large patch of lilac-blue; upper tail-coverts dark purplish green; quills black, outer webs broadly bordered with dark green; lateral rectrices green, with very narrow yellow edges near the tip, blackish towards the base, without any red; central rectrices absent; thighs purplish black; under tail-coverts dark purplish, with deep crimson tips; feet orange, with black claws. Wing 146 mm.

Hab. Mt. Scratchley, British New Guinea.

Mr. R. McD. HAWKER described two apparently new species of birds discovered by himself in Western Somaliland:—

APALIS VIRIDICEPS, sp. n.

A. similis A. flavocinctæ, sed maris pectore haud nigro notato, et pileo viridescente dorso concolore distinguenda. Long. tot. 4·7 poll., culm. 0·5, alæ 2·05, caudæ 2·2, tarsi 0·8.

Hab. Sheik Woolfly, Somaliland.

MIRAFRA MARGINATA, sp. n.

M. similis M. cantillanti, sed marginibus tectricum alarum latissimè arenaceis distinguenda. Long. tot. 5·0 poll., culm. 0·5, alæ 2·95, caudæ 1·85, tarsi 0·9.

Hab. Ugiagi, Somaliland.

Mr. Hawker's collection from Somaliland also contained specimens of *Lanius pomeranus*, *Iynx torquilla*, *Falco cenchris*, *Motacilla alba*, and *Anthus campestris*.

Mr. H. J. PEARSON exhibited a case containing specimens of the adults with their young in down of the Reeve, Temminck's Stint, Dotterel, Red-necked Phalarope, and other species, obtained on his expedition to Waigats.